

Devonshire Infant School

Francis Avenue, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 0AG

Inspection dates

28–29 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have an unwavering commitment to place the well-being of all pupils at the heart of this highly inclusive school.
- The headteacher has the overwhelming support of parents, staff and governors. She has led the school strongly to become a place where parents and carers know that they will receive a warm welcome.
- Leaders strive constantly to improve the school. Teachers and support staff have regular, timely training to ensure that they are equipped to provide the support that pupils need and to drive forward further improvements.
- Teachers know their pupils well and provide interesting and challenging opportunities for them to learn. There is a clear focus on helping pupils to acquire the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. As a result most are making good progress.
- The curriculum is rich, varied and well planned. It provides pupils with many exciting opportunities to acquire skills in science, humanities and the arts. It provides well for their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.
- Governors have an accurate view of the school and visit regularly to monitor improvements. They ensure that the school is a safe place for pupils.
- Pupils are polite, thoughtful and well mannered both in lessons and around the school. The playground is a friendly place where pupils make sure that everyone has a friend to play with and that nobody is left out.
- Children get off to a good start in early years and quickly develop the early skills needed for reading, writing and mathematics. Staff help children to be sociable, co-operate with each other and take turns.
- In 2016, some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, boys and those with low and average starting points, did not achieve as well as they should. Leaders have taken action to improve things and progress is better for most of these groups this year.
- Leaders monitor individual pupils' progress rigorously. However, they do not have systems for tracking groups of pupils. As a result, leaders are not able to quickly identify and address dips in progress for all groups.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management and further raise standards, especially for boys and disadvantaged pupils, by ensuring that:
 - tracking systems provide information about the achievement of groups of pupils, so that leaders and governors can quickly identify and deal with any dips in standards
 - leaders' plans are sharply focused on the impact that they will have on improving outcomes for pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching further so that pupils with below-average starting points make strong rates of progress.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher leads the school with clear vision and a determination to provide the best possible education for pupils. Morale is high and the staff team, parents and governors share her high expectations for pupils' behaviour, well-being and achievement. All are united in the leaders' vision and values.
- As a result of this culture of high expectations, pupils are making good progress and the standards reached by pupils currently in the school are rising.
- The quality of teaching is improving because leaders provide many opportunities for teachers and teaching assistants to develop and improve their practice. Staff regularly observe each other in the classroom and offer helpful advice on ways to become even more effective. When a new initiative or intervention is introduced, leaders make sure that training and support is put in place where it is needed.
- The pupil premium is used well to make sure that disadvantaged pupils' needs are catered for and that any barriers to learning that may exist are overcome. In 2016, disadvantaged pupils achieved less well than other pupils nationally. However, disadvantaged pupils currently in the school are making better progress.
- Additional funding for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is put to good effect. The inclusion manager has a detailed understanding of the needs of these pupils, including those in the development assessment unit. She works closely with staff, agencies and other professionals to make sure that the provision for these pupils is carefully tailored to meet their needs.
- Staff work hard to ensure that parents and carers are involved in the school. There is always a cheery welcome in the morning for parents and children as they arrive. One parent commented, 'The headteacher is extremely professional. She is welcoming, positive, uplifting and inspiring and seems to affect those around her in the same positive way.' Leaders feel that there is still work to be done to help more parents to be actively involved in supporting their children's learning.
- The curriculum is planned with great care to ensure that pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding in a wide range of subjects. Right from the start pupils are taught the vital skills needed for reading, writing and mathematics. There are many opportunities for them to apply these in different areas of learning.
- Leaders who are responsible for each subject have a detailed understanding of how to make learning interesting and challenging. They provide good advice and training for other teachers so that pupils have a rich and varied education.
- Work in sketchbooks of pupils in Year 2 showed a clear journey of improvement from when they started the school. Teachers ensure that pupils make good progress in art by providing them with many opportunities to work with various media. Inspectors saw other strong examples of pupils' progress across the curriculum, including in science and humanities.
- Learning is further brought to life by trips to interesting places. Pupils talked enthusiastically about visits to the Queen Elizabeth Country Park, HMS Warrior, Southsea Castle and Marwell Zoo. They also visit places of worship, such as temples,

mosques and cathedrals, as well as enjoying performances at the theatre. During the inspection, pupils from Year 2 were excitedly preparing to take part in a local music festival.

- Pupils' social, emotional, spiritual and moral development is well catered for. They appreciate diversity because they are part of a harmonious, cohesive school community. Pupils have a growing understanding of fundamental British values and how they apply in their lives.
- There are many activities for pupils outside of the school day. These include some clubs that are provided by subject leaders, such as a history club, a reading club and a club that teaches pupils how to produce a school newspaper.
- The physical education and sports premium funding has been used well to help teachers improve their skills. Provision has also been put in place for pupils to be able to participate in more sports and physical activity, including with other schools. The funding is spent carefully to make sure that it is sustainable.
- Although leaders know the school well and are working hard to improve it, the school's tracking system focuses almost entirely on individual pupils and the progress that they are making. This limits leaders' ability to check on the progress of groups and quickly address any areas of weakness.
- The local authority has an accurate view of the school. They have offered extra support following the disappointing results in 2016.

Governance of the school

- Governors know the school well. They fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are diligent in their work, including their duty to make sure that pupils are kept safe.
- Governors receive a good deal of information from the headteacher and other leaders. They check on the accuracy of what they are told by visiting the school and seeing things for themselves.
- As part of this monitoring, governors visit lessons, talk to pupils and look at their work. They also ensure that the right checks are made on people who work in the school.
- Governors review school improvement plans regularly. However, governors are not able to evaluate precisely the effectiveness of leaders' actions. Plans are not clearly focused on the impact that they will have; or on what success will look like.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have developed a culture where everyone understands that it is their responsibility to keep pupils safe. All aspects of safeguarding are carried out with rigour and determination.
- Pupils are safe. They know that there is always an adult that they can talk to about any worries that they have.
- Pupils receive information in lessons and in assemblies about how to stay safe. They are taught to stay safe on the road and are aware of the dangers that strangers might

present. Pupils have a growing understanding of the risks of being online and are able to explain how to avoid them.

- Staff at all levels receive regular training from the time they start at the school. All are clear about what to do if they are worried about a child and what signs might flag up concerns. Even minor concerns are recorded quickly and thoroughly. Adults understand that, while these observations may not indicate an immediate danger, they can provide information that may be useful in the future.
- Leaders quickly enlist the support and advice of external agencies when this is needed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers have an unswerving focus on teaching basic skills. Pupils make good progress because teachers plan lessons based on an accurate understanding of what pupils know and can do.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have strong subject knowledge, which allows pupils' learning to be extended, their language enriched and their understanding deepened.
- Teachers ask probing questions that challenge pupils' thinking and check on their understanding. Pupils know that the teacher will give them time to put their thoughts into words. Consequently, pupils are confident to explain their ideas and solutions to others in the class, safe in the knowledge that they will be listened to respectfully.
- In the assessment development unit, pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well supported to extend their communication skills. Staff offer the right amount of support, but not too much. Pupils make good progress because staff plan programmes and interventions that are well matched to pupils' needs.
- Teachers encourage pupils to explain their reasoning in mathematics. Pupils have regular opportunities to apply their skills in solving some challenging problems. Classrooms are well resourced, so that pupils are able to develop their mathematical understanding practically. The most able pupils use this equipment at times to clarify their thinking and justify their solutions to quite complicated problems.
- Pupils make good progress in reading. Leaders have invested heavily in books for pupils to enjoy. Areas for reading in class are vibrant and enticing, and well stocked with a wide range of books for pupils to enjoy. Teachers take pupils on regular visits to the city library and this all helps pupils to develop their love of books and reading.
- Teachers help pupils to have a secure grasp of phonics. Starting from the early days in Reception, children are carefully taught to sound out words and most achieve this quickly, making good progress. Teaching of phonics is improving in the school.
- A few pupils, including some who speak English as an additional language, struggle to master phonics. School leaders have looked in great detail at the underlying reasons for this and have taken expert advice. As a result, teachers provide these pupils with different ways of tackling reading. These approaches have been largely successful so these pupils are also able to make good progress in reading.
- Teachers provide homework for pupils to help them practise basic skills in reading and mathematics. Leaders check that there is just enough homework, carefully balancing

what is best for pupils and what is manageable for parents.

- In a few lessons, teachers do not take enough account of what pupils are able to do already. This results in work being too hard for some pupils and too easy for others. When this happens, pupils' attention drifts and learning time is lost.
- Teaching does not always help pupils who have low starting points in writing and mathematics to make the same strong progress that other pupils make. This the school recognises as something that it needs to work on.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident, happy individuals, who know that adults have their best interests at heart and will help them whenever they need it. They feel a valued part of an inclusive school community.
- Pupils feel safe in school because the school is calm and orderly, even at busy times of day, such as lunchtimes and playtimes. Parents, staff and pupils who answered the online surveys all agree that the school is a safe place for pupils.
- Pupils have a growing understanding of the difference between bullying and occasional thoughtless acts. Pupils say that bullying happens from time to time, but that adults quickly nip it in the bud.
- Parents say that the school provides a thoroughly inclusive environment where discrimination is never tolerated and everyone is valued. One quoted the example of the school not charging for any visits or activities so that all pupils can be involved, even if their family is on a low income.
- Teachers provide pupils with excellent role models – showing respect, consideration and acceptance. Pupils follow this example and understand that it is important to treat others kindly and thoughtfully.
- The school works closely with external agencies whenever the need arises. Pupils who might be vulnerable, including children looked after, are taken good care of by well-trained adults who notice even small signs that might cause concern.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. The school community is built on a bedrock of strong, respectful relationships and this helps pupils to feel special and behave well.
- Pupils, parents and staff are unanimous in being overwhelmingly positive about pupils' behaviour.
- Pupils have positive attitudes toward learning and behave well in class almost all of the time. Strong routines are in place in classes so that little time is lost to learning. When teaching does not capture their interest or is too easy or hard for them, occasionally some pupils lose concentration and daydream. While this slows their own learning, it rarely distracts others.

- Pupils take pride in their work. Standards of presentation in pupils' books show steady and consistent improvement and dips in these standards are unusual.
- Pupils can explain the school's rules and appreciate the rewards and sanctions that come with them. The 'Devonshire Diamonds' scheme appeals to everyone and is a positive incentive to behave well.
- Attendance in the school is above national figures for primary schools for all groups, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Few pupils are persistently absent because leaders help parents and families to understand how important it is to be at school every day.
- A few pupils need a good deal of support to sustain good behaviour. Teaching assistants and teachers provide this effectively, but do not always go on to help pupils further develop the skills they need to control their own behaviour.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Children join the early years with skills that are often well below those typical for their age. This was especially true in 2016, when the proportion of children, particularly boys, achieving a good level of development dipped. This year in school, many children are developing their learning and skills rapidly and are making good progress.
- Pupils currently in the school are making good progress. This is evident in their progress this year as seen in books, learning journals and in the learning seen in lessons.
- In 2016, a higher than average proportion of pupils in Year 2 achieved at greater depth in reading and mathematics. An average proportion of pupils achieved at greater depth in writing. However, proportions of pupils achieving at the expected level were below national figures. Disadvantaged pupils, boys and those who had low starting points did least well.
- Leaders have recognised the issues above and have taken swift action to address them by changing the curriculum to appeal more to boys. While there are still gaps between the attainment of boys and girls in Years 1 and 2, these gaps are starting to narrow, as boys currently in the school make better progress than previously.
- Disadvantaged children are achieving well in the early years, in some cases doing better than other pupils, especially in mathematics. In other year groups also they are making good progress and the differences between their attainment and that of other pupils in school are starting to diminish. Leaders recognise that there is still work to be done to further accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils and are using the pupil premium effectively to help achieve this.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. However, pupils who have below average starting points make slower rates of progress than others. Senior leaders recognise that the progress of pupils with low starting points is still not fast enough.
- Pupils in the assessment development unit make good progress from their starting points. This is because adults know them well and provide individualised programmes of learning to build their skills and develop their understanding.

- The proportion of pupils achieving the expected phonics standard in Year 1 is improving steadily and in 2016 it was close to the national average. In particular, disadvantaged pupils' attainment jumped sharply.
- Pupils achieve well in a wide range of subjects as a result of carefully planned learning activities that interest and challenge them, and effective teaching.

Early years provision

Good

- Children get off to a good start in the early years. Many arrive with very low starting points and need to be taught to speak and listen well and take care of themselves. Staff quickly identify their needs and plan activities to help them acquire these skills.
- The environment is bright and stimulating, covering all areas of learning. There is a good range of well-planned, well-resourced activities to engage children's interest and spark their curiosity. Children are able to sustain concentration on challenging activities. Inspectors saw one boy take great care in producing a beautiful picture on the computer. Another boy was carefully cutting out flowers from pieces of card to go into the class florist shop.
- There is a clear focus on developing basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. Staff work hard to help children acquire these vital skills. Teachers and teaching assistants provide strong role models to enrich children's vocabulary and help children to develop good speaking and listening skills.
- Adults observe children carefully when they begin school and make accurate baseline assessments. Assessment records are detailed and identify the right next steps for individuals and groups because they build on what children already know and can do. These assessments also allow staff to check on children's progress. Teaching assistants provide effective support to spot when children make mistakes and help them refine their skills, for example in letter formation.
- Teachers provide good levels of challenge for the most able children, including in mathematics. This was evident in children's work, where they were provided with opportunities to apply their understanding and knowledge in solving tricky problems that needed a good deal of thought.
- Children behave well. They are sociable, cooperative and polite. When some children need support to manage their feelings, or develop new friendships, it is always available from well-trained staff.
- The leader of the early years has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement of the provision. She knows what needs to be done to bring about further improvements and has plans in place to ensure that this happens.
- As in all other areas of the school, parents are warmly welcomed. Parents offer their observations of what their children can do at home to add to what is seen in school.
- Children are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of children in these three areas is in line with expectations for their age and stage of development. This represents improvement in attainment from last year's results. Disadvantaged pupils are making the same progress as others. Boys are doing much better this year. However, pupils with low levels of prior attainment do not make

the same good progress.

- Pupils are safe and well looked after. All safeguarding requirements are met.

School details

Unique reference number	116187
Local authority	Portsmouth
Inspection number	10033039

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Infant
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	4 to 7
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kerry Bralee
Headteacher	Jacqueline Collins
Telephone number	02392 734902
Website	www.devonshire.portsmouth.sch.uk
Email address	admin@devonshire.portsmouth.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school runs a development assessment unit onsite. This provides for 12 pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Almost all of these pupils have an education, health care plan.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized primary school.
- There are two classes in each year group.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. However, the proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well above average.

- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is above the national average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in all classes across the school. A learning walk was carried out jointly with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. In addition, inspectors scrutinised pupils' work and listened to some pupils read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the following people: pupils; the chair of the governing body and three other governors; the headteacher and deputy headteacher; middle leaders; a group of three teaching assistants and three teachers; and members of the school council. The lead inspector had a telephone interview with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors undertook a check of the school's policies and procedures for the safeguarding of pupils, including the statutory checks made during the recruitment of new staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of information produced by the school, including information on pupils' progress and attainment, behaviour and attendance, and the school's own evaluation of its work. They considered reports to the governing body, minutes of their meetings and the school's plans for further improvement.
- Inspectors considered the 28 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors also spoke to parents in the playground at the start of the day. Inspectors also took into account 27 responses to the staff questionnaire and 61 responses to the pupil survey.

Inspection team

Bruce Waelend, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Jenny Boyd	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Shaughnessy	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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